

Title of Article: Household food Insecurity and Exclusive Breastfeeding: Implications for Child Survival in Osogbo, Osun State Nigeria.

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Abstract: Increase in the prices of food commodities in the last seven years has resulted to food crisis and food intake. Consequently, these effects impact the health and nutritional status of households especially among lactating mothers, infants, and pregnant women. The study therefore examines the impact of household food insecurity on the exclusive breast-feeding and its implications for child survival. The study was carried out in Osogbo, Osun State south-western Nigeria. A multi-stage random sampling procedure was employed in the administration of 230 questionnaires to lactating mothers. For qualitative data, four focus group discussions (FGD) were conducted to collect information from married women within the study population. The data collected were subjected to basic demographic analytical techniques. From the study it was revealed that less than 40% practice exclusive breastfeeding while majority of the respondents (65%) start introducing complementary feeding from four months. Reasons given for the complimentary feeding include inadequate milk in the breast, insufficient food for the mother and child's illness. Two thirds of the respondents explained that their children had illnesses in the last two weeks preceding the survey. There is a significant relationship between ever-experienced food shortage, exclusive breastfeeding and child illness. Level of income, education, number of children, place of delivery and meal skipping habits on the likelihood of practicing exclusive breastfeeding is established in the study. The study concludes that for Nigeria to achieve reduction in infant mortality, food production must be given adequate priority.